

## COMMISSION COMMENTS

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## TRAINING & EXPERIENCE EVALUATIONS

Training and Experience (T&E) evaluations are a type of civil service examination used to assess the experience, training, and education of a job applicant. A T&E is used when specific education or experience is a good predictor of success on the job. Normally, the T&E is in the form of a questionnaire that asks about education, work or volunteer experience in areas related to the job being tested.

The Commission currently uses two types of T&E formats. The first type asks candidates to list tasks they have performed on previous jobs, and may ask candidates to indicate the level of expertise they have achieved performing those tasks. Typically two graders score this T&E based on a pre-determined rating system. The scoring system awards points for tasks that have been performed in a certain job or classroom courses that were taken and passed.

The second type of T&E is a forced-choice multiple-choice T&E. On this type of test candidates are presented with a series of four-alternative questions, where three of the alternatives are tasks that may have been performed on a previous job. Candidates are asked to indicate which of the three they have performed most frequently in their previous job or through hands-on training. The fourth alternative is an "I have not performed any of the three tasks" statement. Each alternative is weighted according to

ratings provided by Subject Matter Experts in the field being tested.

For most exams, approved applicants will receive a Work History Questionnaire with the application approval notice (Notice of Examination). Candidates are required to bring the completed Work History Questionnaire to the test site and will then complete the T&E using information from the Work History Questionnaire.

The T&E may be used in addition to another exam component, such as a multiple-choice or performance test, or it may be the only test component used.

### Tips for Completing a Work History Questionnaire and a T&E:

- Applicants are not permitted to change any information on the Work History Questionnaire or T&E once they have been submitted—they should be completed carefully.
- Information on previous employment should be complete and accurate, including job titles, dates of employment, employment status (full time or part time), average hours worked per week and contact phone numbers.
- Responses should be printed or typed so that they are clear and legible.
- Be honest — the final test score is determined only by the information provided, and that information may be verified.

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*"Success is the sum of small efforts repeated day in and day out."*

— Robert Collier

## PUBLIC SAFETY TESTING ON THE HORIZON!

If you or someone you know has considered becoming a Police Officer or Firefighter OR if you are currently a Columbus Police Officer and are ready for a promotion...your time is quickly approaching! We will begin accepting applications for Police Sergeant in July, for Police Officer in October, and for Firefighter in 2006. As more information becomes available for these and other examinations, it will be posted on our website at [www.csc.columbus.gov](http://www.csc.columbus.gov).

The Police Sergeant examination is given promotionally for current Police Officers with at least three years of

service and will include information sessions in August, with testing beginning in September. Entry-level Police Officer Information sessions will be held in November and testing will begin in December. The dates for the 2006 Firefighter Examination are coming soon.

To receive an application packet for Police Officer or Firefighter, complete a Job Class Interest Sheet on our website, or stop in our offices downtown at 50 West Gay Street. If you have questions, or would like a Job Class Interest Sheet mailed, call Sheri LaVette at (614) 645-7708.

## BACKGROUND CHECKS



The Civil Service Commission requires a background check of most candidates so that appointing authorities can make sound hiring decisions when filling a vacancy. According to the Civil Service Rules, candidates may be disqualified or removed from an eligible or

certification list if they have been convicted of a felony or job related misdemeanor. An appointing authority can refuse to hire someone if they find, through the background process, that the individual has a job-related criminal conviction.

A final candidate being considered for appointment, whether from a certification list or through department recruiting, must have a background check. The background check must be conducted and the results received prior to the candidate going through the pre-employment interview (walk-through) process.

Background checks are required for the following:

- a. All new hires (including part-time & seasonal);
- b. All employees changing classifications.

The following are exempt from the required background check procedures:

- a. Individuals receiving a Temporary appointment;
- b. Individuals under 18 years of age;

Although most departments schedule the background check by contacting the Civil Service Commission, some departments conduct their own background checks. The Departments of Public Utilities and Recreation and Parks both use their own WEBCHECK systems, and the Department of Public Safety and the City Attorney's Office use LEADS.

WEBCHECK is a very simple process— it is totally electronic and there is no ink involved. Fingerprints are captured via a small camera and sent electronically to the Ohio Bureau of Criminal Identification and Investigation. The results are usually received within one to two business days. In situations where the applicant's prints cannot be taken electronically due to missing digits, scarred or badly calloused hands, ink prints may be required. In this case, since ink prints take more time to process, it may delay the appointment process.

## MEET COMMISSION EMPLOYEE...MARGARET MELFI!

Margaret Melfi has worked for the Civil Service Commission for over 9 years. As a Human Resources Assistant in payroll verification, Margaret helps verify the City personnel transactions for each pay period, processes employee step increases and is responsible for maintaining the large number of employee personnel files at the Commission. Margaret appreciates that her job gives her the opportunity to work with many different people in departments throughout the City.



Prior to working for the City, Margaret was employed at Ohio Bell for 13 years and spent time at home raising her family.

Away from the office, Margaret is devoted to her family and enjoys spending time with her husband Tony and her adult daughter Angela. She likes visiting places of interest in and around Columbus, where she has lived all of her life, and also traveling to explore new places.

# THE RESIDENCY REQUIREMENT

Most towns, cities and counties have ordinances requiring public employees to live in that jurisdiction or within a certain distance from their work location. Some of the most common reasons for jurisdictions to have a residency requirement are to decrease employee tardiness and absenteeism and/or to ensure an adequate response time to emergencies. Some employees may also benefit from having more familiarity with the City's neighborhoods and citizens, and a sense of pride from serving the community where they live. It is also beneficial for the local economy for employees to spend their earnings within the jurisdiction where they work and live.

As originally adopted in 1914, the City Charter required City employees to reside within the City of Columbus. In 1956, the requirement was amended to include residence within Franklin County and in May of 1971, it was amended to expand the residency area to include the six contiguous counties. City Charter Section 158-1 states,

*"Unless otherwise specifically provided by this Charter, all employees in the unclassified service and in the competitive class of classified service of the City shall at all times, during their employment, maintain their residence within the boundary lines of the County of Franklin or within the boundary lines of the counties that border on the County of Franklin..."*

The only City employees not required to comply with the residency requirement are non-competitive employees. Elected officials, of course, are required to reside within the jurisdiction of their office – within the City of Columbus. All new City employees or employees changing job classes are required to sign a Residency Verification form at the time of hire or transfer. If a candidate does not meet the residency requirement, they cannot be hired.

The Civil Service Commission is responsible for ensuring compliance with the residency requirement and for investigating whenever a possible violation is alleged.

During the course of an investigation, the Civil Service Commission may use online resources such as county auditor websites and other public records to verify the resident county of an employee. If it is clear from those public records that the employee complies with the

residency requirement, then the investigation is closed and no further action is taken.

If the investigation raises doubt about the employee's compliance, the employee is scheduled for a hearing in front of a Civil Service Commission Hearing Officer. The employee must bring documentation to the hearing that proves they meet the residency requirement, including but not limited to, a deed, purchase agreement or insurance policy showing home ownership or a lease from an independent party, and completed copies of filed Federal, State, or Local Income Tax returns. The employee may also be asked to provide an Ohio driver's

license or official ID card, bank statements or checks with the address imprinted on the checks, utility bills bearing the property address and their name, or other mail sent to them at the address in question.

Based on the documentation provided by the employee at the hearing, the Hearing Officer will make a recommendation to the full Civil Service Commission at their next regularly scheduled meeting as to whether or not the employee is in compliance with the Residency Requirement. If the Commission finds an employee to be in violation, the employee will be placed on unpaid administrative leave. If the employee establishes an appropriate residence within 30 calendar days, he or she will be returned to work as soon as practicable. If the employee fails to establish an appropriate residence during the first 30 days of the unpaid leave, he or she will remain in unpaid administrative leave status pending the outcome of disciplinary proceedings, and establishment of an appropriate residence as determined by the Commission. Noncompliance with the residency requirement for 31 days or longer constitutes just cause for termination, and any disciplinary action is initiated by the employee's Appointing Authority, not the Commission.



**Acceptable counties of residence: Franklin, Delaware, Licking, Fairfield, Pickaway, Madison, and Union**

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## WELCOME, NEW EMPLOYEES!

The Civil Service Commission staff would like to welcome two new employees — Alliece Harris is working in the Applicant and Employee Services Unit at the applications counter as a Clerk II and Linda Isaac, formerly of the Division of Police, is working in non-uniformed testing in Classification and Selection as a Personnel Analyst I. Welcome, Alliece and Linda!

## STREAMLINING THE APPLICATION PROCESS

Did you know that you can apply for civil service tests with the City of Columbus without leaving your home? If you have a computer with Internet access, filing an application with the City of Columbus is at your fingertips. The Civil Service Commission website contains a wealth of information regarding employment with the City, including a listing of all job classifications for which the City is currently accepting applications. Simply click your way through the application process and a confirmation number will appear on the screen at the conclusion of the online submission. **Please note that a confirmation number serves to verify receipt of your online application and should be saved for your records.**

No computer? No problem! Stop by our office to pick up a Job Class Interest pack or call (614) 645-8369 to request one via mail. The Job Class Interest pack will enable you to be notified prior to the application period for each job class in which you are interested. Prior to accepting applications, all who have expressed an interest in the job class are mailed an application and a notice including the filing dates for the job. Interested job seekers should complete the application and either submit it by mail or in person.

The deadlines for filing applications are as follows:

- Applications submitted via U.S. mail must be postmarked by the last day of the filing period (the closing date) **and** received by the Commission within five (5) business days after the closing date in order to be considered for examination.
- Applications submitted electronically via our website must be submitted no later than midnight of the closing date.

In order to facilitate the acceptance of applications online and by mail, applicants can now submit documentation for veteran's preference points and documentation of education, such as a college transcript, up to the final day of testing; after the final day of testing these materials will not be accepted. As always, those participating in the exam will be notified by mail of the exam results. Those passing the exam will be placed on the eligible list for a period of two years.

For a complete listing of current vacant positions and/or examinations for which applications are currently being accepted, please visit the Civil Service Commission's web site at [www.csc.columbus.gov](http://www.csc.columbus.gov), or call our Job Line at (614) 645-7667.